



November 20, 2016

## Thanksgiving Reflections

**"To be grateful is to recognize the love of God in everything He has given us -- and He has given us everything. Every breath we draw is a gift of His love, every moment of existence is a grace, for it brings with it immense graces from Him." - Thomas Merton (*Thoughts on Solitude*)**

Thomas Merton understood what it means to be truly thankful. Our existence, our very breath has been given to us by God. We know love because God first loved us! Does it make a difference in your life to know that God has given you your very life and that through Jesus Christ, God loves you no matter how broken, weak, bruised, or battered you are?

We, the church, have a message for our hurting world. We know of God's love and we are thankful for that. A way of being thankful is to share that news. Thanksgiving isn't just about being thankful for what we have—for our breath, our existence—it's about allowing our thanksgiving to overflow into the lives of others.

Jesus calls us to love God and to love others. That's all! It is that simple. Out of thankfulness for the love of God in Jesus Christ, we are called to love others. We love others by welcoming the least of these into our worship services and sharing our joy and love of God! We love others by giving food, clothing, drink with a joyfulness that exudes thankfulness.

I challenge you in this Thanksgiving season to be grateful and to give thanks to God who has given us everything. Then share your abundance with everyone you meet. Show your thankfulness in ways that others can bear witness that you are a disciple of Jesus Christ. Be excited to worship, be passionate about inviting others to join you, tell others how God has moved and transformed your life.

May you have a blessed Thanksgiving in this season and every day.

**- Rev. Sharon S. Morris, Association Conference Minister**



## Getting to Know :

### Christ Church UCC

1003 W. Marshall St., Norristown, PA 19401



Greetings from Christ Church in the west-end of Norristown. We are celebrating our 120<sup>th</sup> year. We had our beginning in 1891 as a mission Sunday School of a church located in downtown Norristown. In 1896 the church was organized and known as Christ Reformed Church.

We are very proud of our church building built and dedicated in 1931. It is a wonderful structure with stained glass windows depicting the life of Christ and many symbols. We are handi-

capped accessible with an elevator to our social hall and air conditioning in the sanctuary. Our Moller organ is one of the finest in Norristown. The Rev. Jeffrey G. Johnson was called in July 2011 and has served us faithfully, a dedicated and caring pastor.

In October we celebrated "Homecoming Sunday" in which former members and friends were invited and many attended. Also returning were former pastors: Dr. Robert E. Reiff, Rev. Martha B. Boyer, Rev. Frank McKenzie and our "church son" Rev. Robert H. Naylor. All reminisced on their years with us and their current activities. A highlight of the service was the singing of the anthem in which former choir members in attendance were invited to participate. What a joyous sound to hear so many voices sing to a very large congregation. A delicious meal followed the service with considerable memorabilia on display.

Community outreach is an important part of our mission. The "West-End Pre School" just celebrated 50 years in existence and has been housed in our building for the last twenty. Local agencies are supported by our members with contributions, food and clothing. Participation by our youth is both helpful and rewarding.

The pastor communicates weekly with our members via e-mail and we publish a monthly newsletter "The Courier". Our website is first-class at [www.uccchristchurch.org](http://www.uccchristchurch.org).



Prayers are requested for Christ Church UCC in Norristown and  
Rev. Jeffrey G. Johnson.